



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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BOUNDARIES ADJUSTED AT KODIAK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton today announced approval of an order in effect adding approximately 378,840 acres to the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. At the same time the order makes some 137,000 additional acres of non-refuge land available east of the refuge for cattle grazing, settlement and other purposes.

The refuge is set aside on Kodiak Island as a sanctuary for Alaska brown (Kodiak) bear and other wildlife. The refuge will now cover about 1,814,880 acres.

The Kodiak bear is the largest of all carnivorous animals. It weighs as much as a ton. The habitat of the species is limited to an area of about 100,000 square miles.

The refuge was created in 1941 and provided for cattle grazing and settlement in a one-mile strip of shoreline around the refuge.

Secretary Seaton said the new order revokes the original withdrawal and establishes the refuge anew. It closes virtually all of the coastal strip to further grazing and other entry under the public land laws.

The 1941 order withdrew approximately 1,957,000 acres. But because it included the one-mile strip--aggregating some 520,960 acres--the effective refuge actually has that much smaller, Secretary Seaton explained.

The new order changes the east boundary of the refuge to exclude the 137,000 acres and thus affords that much additional nonrefuge land on the east for cattle grazing and other uses. This area has a much higher potential for commercially feasible grazing use than the strip, Secretary Seaton said. He cited the eastern area's favorable climate and terrain and proximity to processing and transportation facilities at Kodiak, the island's principal seaport.

The Secretary said the new order provides for expansion of eight existing communities on the islands. They are Old Harbor, Akhiok, Larsen Bay, Uganik, Uyak, Alitak, Ayakulik and Kaguyak. At each site, an area one mile square is excluded from the refuge.

"The new order will be an important step forward in improving administration of the Kodiak National Wildlife Range," Secretary Seaton said. "At the same time it will greatly help to develop an established grazing industry in Alaska."

Unlike the old withdrawal, the new one closes the refuge to the staking of mining claims under the General Mining Laws, he said.

Readjustment of the refuge boundaries followed an extensive departmental field investigation and report conducted jointly by the United States Fish and Wildlife service and the Bureau of Land Management. The lands were withdrawn on behalf of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

The order was made subject to valid existing rights and will close the land to all forms of entry and appropriation under the public land laws including the mining but not the mineral leasing laws or disposals under the Materials Act.

A complete description of the affected lands and the terms of the withdrawal order will be published in the Federal Register.

A map is attached showing the new boundary refuge boundaries and the area opened to grazing on the east.

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